Examiners' Report
Lead Examiner Feedback

June 2022

Pearson BTEC Nationals
In Performing Arts (31559H)
Unit 5: Individual Performance Commission

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the world's leading learning company. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications website at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html for our BTEC qualifications.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/contact-us.html

If you have any subject specific questions about this specification that require the help of a subject specialist, you can speak directly to the subject team at Pearson. Their contact details can be found on this link:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-for-you/teachers.html

You can also use our online Ask the Expert service at https://www.edexcelonline.com
You will need an Edexcel Online username and password to access this service.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at: www.pearson.com/uk

June 2022
Publications Code 31559H_2206_ER
All the material in this publication is copyright
© Pearson Education Ltd 2022

Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html

Awarding BTEC qualifications in 2022

Ofqual has set out their plans for awarding qualifications in 2022 and intend to return to a normal, pre-pandemic, approach to grading standards over by 2023. They have confirmed that 2022 will be a transition year, to reflect that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.

Our guiding principle and approach to awarding BTEC qualification results in 2022 will be to ensure parity in relation to the approach being taken for GCSE and A level learners. BTEC courses have a different structure and design to academic qualifications - BTECs are modular qualifications (with assessments taking place throughout the course)

compared to GCSEs and A levels which are linear (assessed and awarded at the same time at the end of the year), and therefore our approach needs to be different.

In 2022 we will return to the usual method of calculating BTEC qualification results, however adaptations including, U-TAGs and reduced internal assessment, are in place to provide a comprehensive package of support for students.

The basis of our awarding approach to BTECs this year is to ensure it is as fair as possible for all learners. We will use a range of evidence to set grade boundaries for the external units. Part of this evidence will be to closely monitor learner performance in all assessments that contribute to learners' final qualification grade, to ensure parity with A level and GCSEs.

Further information can be found on our website and via our Social Media channels.

31559H: Individual Performance Commission

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	**0**	**12**	**22**	**32**	**42**

Introduction

Unit 5: Individual Performance Commission is a mandatory, externally assessed unit on the following qualification sizes of the BTEC Nationals in Performing Arts: Diploma and Extended Diploma.

This Level 3 unit has 120 guided learning hours, ensuring learners have plenty of opportunity to understand the nature and purpose of commission work including how to respond individually to the specific requirements of a commission brief.

During the teaching and learning period for this unit learners should develop their knowledge and understanding of different types of commissioning bodies, the purpose of a commission and different types of commission briefs. Learners should also develop their understanding of how to respond to the specific requirements of a range of commission briefs, how to develop and shape their performance ideas in response to the specific requirements of the commission, how to create and write a proposal, how to structure their time and work individually when rehearsing, practicing, reviewing and developing their work and how to evaluate the development process and their ability to address the requirements of the commission brief.

The Unit 5 task paper is set once every year. It is normally published in March prior to external assessment in the summer series, the submission deadline for learner work is in May. Due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic the task paper this year was released in February.

Learners need to respond to the specific requirements of the commission brief/the set task. The set task changes each series and it is essential that learners respond to the content of the specific set task in the year of their assessment.

Once the task paper is released learners must work independently, they should spend up to 10 hours on applied research and planning in response to the commission brief in order to inform their ideas for their individual performance and their written proposal.

The writing up of the proposal is a 1 hour supervised activity.

Learners should then spend up to a further 30 hours on the development and rehearsal of their individual performance.

Following the performance learners should spend up to 1 hour in preparation for writing up their evaluation. The writing up of the evaluation is a 1 hour supervised activity.

It would be helpful to guide learners during teaching and learning to respond to **all** the aspects of the commission as outlined in the task paper and to ensure they fully understand that their written proposal and performance work should be focused upon meeting the requirements of the commission and the role as outlined in the task paper. The intention of this unit is that the work learners produce will be able to be commissioned without further rehearsal, work or refinement by, this year, *The Wonder of Words Literary Festival* committee for performance on a small stage in a pop-up venue close to the main hall, alongside the main programme of events as part of a literary festival with an overarching theme of *Mystery* and an aim of encouraging a love of books, poetry and all forms of the written and spoken word.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Examiners experienced a very wide range of responses covering a range of performance disciplines and the full spread of marks available.

Learners who produced the strongest responses had, in all aspects of their work, fully considered the commissioning body, the specific requirements of the commission, the theme and one of the stimuli on the task paper.

The best work seen demonstrated an accomplished ability to respond creatively to **all** the requirements of the set task/commission brief.

In these responses, solo performance work was suitable for inclusion in and performance at The Wonder of Words Literary Festival. There were some excellent ideas focused upon inspiring and entertaining young festival-goers whilst also challenging and promoting debate around the importance of books and reading for younger audiences. This work was focused upon introducing young audiences to the magic of stories in all forms and formats and was focused upon encouraging a love of books, poetry and all forms of the spoken word. The aim of this work was clearly focused upon immersing the audience in the world of stories and igniting the spark that creates them.

Activity 1: Written Proposal

AO1: Formulate ideas that demonstrate understanding of a commission brief

The written proposal assesses learners' ability to present their creative ideas for their individual performance, in response to the requirements of the commissioning body, the specific requirements of the commission brief, the stimulus and the theme.

The ideas that learners present should be informed by the applied research they have undertaken and their creative intentions should be fully justified in relation to all of the requirements of the commission brief.

In the strongest written proposals, ideas and creative intentions were logically informed by research and fully justified in relation to all of the requirements of the commission brief including the theme and the chosen stimulus. The activities learners were going to need to carry out and the resources they required were presented in a logical and considered manner.

Less successful written proposals made fewer and/or less relevant references to research and tended to consider the theme and generally one of the stimuli with only cursory consideration of the other requirements of the commission brief.

Some learners simply repeated the information provided in the task paper about the commissioning body indicating they were going to respond to these requirements without any explanation of how they were going to do this or what they were going to do. This approach didn't produce evidence which could be given much credit.

In some less successful responses, learners ignored some or all of the requirements of the commissioning body and instead dictated and changed the specific aspects they were going to respond to. This was most commonly done in relation to the target audience where some learners decided they were going to define their own target audience for example:

I have narrowed down my target audience, recognising the difference between a 5 year old and 15 year old, to the age group 7-9 as I am experienced with engaging group through volunteering and this is the age where a more structured school curriculum is introduced.

And

Due to the specific themes that I will be exploring within my performance, for example insecurity and ambiguity, my target audience is the age range of 14-21, despite this being a broad age range, I believe specifically within this age group social media Is a huge important factor meaning books, art and literature are overlooked. To ensure my passion for literature is successfully communicated to the audience, I will create content that is engaging and explore relevant themes to which they are able to relate too as well as raise awareness on deeper themes in which they might possibly suffer within later life and how to handle these issues.

Learner who define their own audience age range are not demonstrating a full understanding of the requirements of responding to this aspect of a commission. The festival committee of The Wonder of Words Literary Festival have defined the audience as 'young festival goers' and they are looking to commission performance work aimed at 'young audiences' not another age group.

As already outlined, in order to achieve at the highest-level, learners need to consider the commissioning body and the specific requirements of the commission itself, the key aspects of which this series were as follows:

- *The Wonder of Words Literary Festival* committee who are looking to commission an exciting programme of solo performances in order to inspire and entertain young festival-goers.
- Performance work should be in a format suitable for a small stage in a pop-up venue.
- Performances are to be presented on a 'rolling basis' during the festival and therefore set up and strike times must be minimal.
- Performance work should respond to the theme of *Mystery* and one of the stimuli in the task paper.
- Performance work should aim to introduce young audiences to the magic of stories in all forms and formats, captivating the audience and encouraging everyone to fall in love with reading, poetry, literature and all forms of the arts.

- Performance work should also inspire, entertain, challenge and promote debate around the importance of books and reading for younger audiences.

The strongest work also considered the overall aims of the festival:

- To encourage a love of books, poetry and all forms of the written and spoken word.

- To immerse the audience in the world of stories and to ignite the spark that creates them.

In the strongest responses, learners' creative ideas, as presented in their written proposals, responded to the specific requirements of the commissioning body. Their creative intentions were focused on responding to the theme of *Mystery* and to one of the two stimuli. There was usually a clear thought process documenting the journey the learner had been on when responding to the commission.

The quote from Albert Einstein's 'Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world'. Made me think about how education was and still is not available to everyone especially during hard times such as during the war. A book that comes to mind is the book of Anne Frank, the diary of a young girl. The book is a diary of her life, telling us how she went into hiding and how she dealt with the changes before it stopped after her and her family got caught by the German soldiers. The quote made me think of the real meaning of knowledge and imagination. Imagination is the faculty and ability to come up with new ideas, images or concepts of external objectives that are not present and knowledge is the information and skills acquired through experience or education. After conducting research on the Anne Frank story I found out that she was described as a lively, curious 13 year old girl with a very vivid imagination. By reading her book I found out that Anne Frank grow up during the period of the Germans trying to get into power and that she was of jewish decent which means she was targeted that's why her and her family went into hiding which resulted in Anne Frank's education being stopped which perfectly links to the concept that imagination is more important than knowledge. The theme that I must present though the dance is mystery which is something that is impossible to understand or explain. Anne Frank lived a mystery from the moment she went into hiding, the mystery of not knowing what is gonna happen the next day in addition to that the mystery of what actually the German soldiers would do to them. This is because they knew they were being taken to labour camps to work but the truth was that they were sent to

concentration camps, they were called labour camps to camouflage the truth of Hitler's plans. A quote from her diary is 'People can tell me to keep your mouth shut, but that doesn't stop you from having your opinion linked to the stimulus. People can tell that knowledge is more important but no one can stop you from having your imagination.

And

I chose stimulus 2. This was an image of an ivy covered metal gate leading into a vast green abyss. After initially looking at my chosen stimulus I considered how mysterious the gates appeared and I thought of the quote 'mystery lies within'. Additionally, this led me to imagining if each branch of ivy on the gate could represent a mystery and tell a different story……. A thought was to have a fairy tale story within the performance, as characters and enchanted objects in these stories often come to life e.g. Aladdin's lamp.

After reading through some classic fairy tales I knew I had to include these within my piece……

The title of my production will be The Enchanted Story Garden. Based around a young boy called Jake who uses his imagination and discovers a love for reading through exploring and creativity. The start of the performance will be a teddy bear's picnic in the garden after the last day of school for the year…….. This character could start out hating books and thinking readings dull. However, as he discovers the Enchanted Story Garden his perspective shifts. Therefore, Jake could discover that all the plants in the garden come alive and turn into enchanted objects from fair ytales e.g. the bean plant becomes a beanstalk or a daisy becomes a magic lamp.

…… The more Jake uses his imagination, the more plants in the garden will come alive…..

…. Subsequently, I plan on using engaging language and physical humour to build a love for reading and literacy. An idea I had was to include a reading strategy found in most primary schools, popcorn reading……

And

After reviewing the two stimuli, I decided to base my piece upon the quotation 'imagination is more important than knowledge, knowledge is limited, imagination encircles the world'…….

Upon my research, I found that children tend to have a heightened level of curiosity……. They are more intrigued by the world around them. Due to this I decided that ….. as children have an instinctive fascination for anything mysterious dure to keeping them on their feet and guessing what will happen. My initial idea is for this is to have a 'book machine' in which one says a rhyme to and in return a mysterious, unknown book will appear; once read, it'll transport the reader to the world of that story. This will be an excellent means of intertwining the concept of mystery and imagination mentioned in the quotation as the viewer will be unaware of what mysterious land they will be transported to and will require their imagination to go there within the performance.

I found that children learn most effectively through engaging, observing and listening and therefore I intend to utilise conventions of singing, dancing and acting; this allows my piece to be inclusive for all types of learners regardless as to whether they respond better to audiological or visual based material. I discovered that young children find humour within distortion of reality meaning that often what amuses them is exaggerations of aspects of real life. Because of this, I will partake in grand, exuberant and extravagant movements (whether this be in dance-based choreography or mannerisms and gestures in acting). This will ultimately ensure that my performance is viewed as humorous and enjoyable for a younger audience who have a contrasting view of humour.

The need for creative ideas to have been informed by research was understood by most learners, and generally, ideas and intentions were at least partially informed by research. Stronger responses evidenced the use of research to inform the creative intentions as can be seen in the examples above and below:

My initial idea for the commission is to use the Secret Garden. When researching the musical soundtrack, I discovered 'Hold On' which Martha sings to Mary Lennox, the protagonist. It is centred around inspiring Mary to stay strong as she is potentially getting sent away for another time. This connects to the idea of parental relationships as Mary is an orphan who lost her parents so Martha becomes the mother figure that she lost, in this song. To find out more about how being an orphan affects your learning I explored the NPR website. They have scientific research that show much 'neglect is awful for the brain'. It can cause 'severe behaviour and emotional problems such as aggression, having lesson knowledge and understanding of the world' which can result in 'psychiatric impairment during their adulthood'. This helps me understand how to communicate my creative intention as I now want to show the idea of how having a poor childhood with a lack of reading can affect someone. I want to

create this motherly figure with Martha and show how Mary becomes a confident, kind person so that the young audience can feel that their past can't hold them back and that reading can help them find joy.

And

Currently in the UK, 'The Strange Case of Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde' is used at GCSE level for English literature exams so many children around the ages of 15 and 16 will be reading this story in order to write up their essays in the summer. To support this, I will be using my piece to dive deeper into the story and portray two of its main characters (Jeckyll and Hyde). I'm hoping dance will give students and younger children a unique way of understanding an 1800s novel whilst also getting to know its author, who will be a main theme in my piece.

In some less successful responses research had been undertaken, however this was not applied in the context of the commissioning brief or used to shape the piece to be performed, often offering only a tenuous link to the chosen stimulus and/or theme:

In a survey done in 2021, it was revealed that 51.5% of young people enjoyed reading, this is an increase from 2020 where 47.8% of young people enjoyed it (literacytrust.org), I believe the reason for this increase is due to Covid. Because people couldn't really leave their houses, it meant that they were able to immerse themselves in books. Therefore, these festivals are even more important as those that didn't read much before now have an opportunity to learn more about this hobby and connect with other likeminded people. This is another reason that the theme of mystery is fitting for this festival as newcomers won't know what to expect at these festivals and even people who have been before, because of the break from activities due to lockdown, these festivals may have a different and fresh approach to them.

Examiners reported that learners responded equally to both stimuli.

As part of their written proposal learners also need to consider the activities they need to carry out to produce their individual performance and the resources they are going to need. Almost all learners understood the requirement to use only a minimum amount of technical resources and to work towards producing a performance for a small stage in a pop-up venue.

In general, learners presented cogent reasons for their resource choices and most learners were able to outline the activities they needed to carry out preparation for their final performance:

During my creation time, I will ensure that I have planned the details of my performance and set myself time requirements for each section. By the end of the first week, I plan to give myself one hour of rehearsal time to record voice overs, and begin rehearsing with them and over the choreography. Once this is completed I plan by the end of the second week, to know all my monologues and have them rehearsed with the choreography so that I can begin to rehearse my solo performance of the song…. At the end of third week, I will ensure my performance is finished and has been well rehearsed and refined and ready to perform to my target audience at the festival.

Only a few learners fully justified the resources they would need and the activities they planned to carry out and some learners, disappointingly, completely ignored the requirement to include details of time management, activities to be carried out and resources to be used in their written proposal.

Activity 2: Individual Performance

AO2: Apply an understanding of developing performance content in response to a commission brief
AO3: Apply performance skills to communicate creative intentions in relation to a commision brief

In their individual performance, learners must apply their performance skills in order to communicate their creative intentions and demonstrate their technical application of performance skills. The content of the work learners perform should be fully refined, meet all the requirements of the commission and both interpret and embody the theme and chosen stimulus.

Examiners were impressed by the variety and range of work learners developed. There were some very impressive performances in all performance disciplines and in a range of styles within each discipline. No one performance style or discipline was more interesting or more successful than another. The effectiveness of the individual performance depended upon how closely the performance discipline, performance style or range of styles responded to the specific requirements of the commission brief, the theme and the chosen stimulus.

It is important to clarify this is a performance commission and the commissioning body, *The Wonder of Words Literary Festival* committee is looking for a 'performance' rather than somebody reading from a book. Where learners opted to just sit and read from a book this rarely offered them the opportunity to realise performance skills effectively or imaginatively. This work was often limited or adequate at best. It was unlikely to 'captivate the audience through the skills of the performer' or to 'inspire, entertain, challenge and promote debate around the importance of books and reading for a younger audience.' Some learners showed impressive technical skill at the beginning or end of their individual performance which clearly responded to all aspects of the commission brief and then they spent the other part of their performance with their head down reading, which did unfortunately have an impact upon their overall achievement. However, other learners really used the performance art of storytelling to tell their story and when the story was told with all the *performing arts* skills of a storyteller the performance work was often impressive.

In a few cases, it didn't seem as if learners had fully refined their work and it is important to remember that this performance is not a 'working process'; rather the commissioning body are looking for individual performance work which they can put straight onto a small stage in their *Wonder of Words Literary Festival*. Learners should be producing finished work ready for a public audience.

In several performances, a very high level of technical skill was evident however learners were not able to access the full range of marks as their performance pieces were not responding fully to all the requirements of the commission. Dancers, for example, occasionally performed a solo which bore little relation to the requirements of the commission other than in being an individual performance or responding very generically to one of the stimuli and/or the theme of *Mystery*, this was self-limiting however good the level of technical skill displayed.

Occasionally, the content of some performance work was inappropriate for a young audience which was also self-limiting even when a high level of skill was evident.

Having said the above, there were some absolutely outstanding individual performances, which a committee such as *The Wonder of Words Festival* committee would have been privileged to commission and place directly into their programme of individual performance work.

The content of these outstanding pieces was sophisticated and fully refined. In this work, learners' creative intentions were imaginatively realised and performance skills were assured and fluent, showing outstanding control and consistency. Another feature was the research undertaken was relevant and ensured the individual performance met all the requirements of the commission brief. A quality of the performance was that the research, the theme, the chosen stimulus and the other requirements of the commission brief were integrated seamlessly into the final piece. These performances demonstrated highly proficient skills and techniques and were always engaging and memorable.

One learner for example created their own character of 'The Word Wizard', speaking directly to the audience and using magic for direct participation to find the missing word as part of the story running through the performance. The objective being to encourage young people to read by developing a love of words.

Another notable performance was about Helen Keller and her tutor; this showed real creativity and was interestingly performed. The learner's character started by refusing to read and ended up working with braille. The journey of the character was performed via dance, some recorded narration and spoken monologue and the work had an energy and playfulness to it when performed.

Another performance explored the idea of different books and indicated this by a large book lamp which changed colour every time the reader explored the world of a different book. This exploration took place via dance, recorded narration and live monologue. Every new world was entered by the learner opening the book, stepping 'into'(over) the book and exploring the characters within the book.

An equally memorable performance was based on the Oompa Loompas in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and considered aspects of the story from the Oompa Loompas perspective. It was humorous and engaging and performed using mime, some dance and song.

Activity 3: Written Evaluation

AO4: Evaluate the effectiveness of own work

In the written evaluation, learners need to evaluate how they have developed their performance work, justifying the decisions and choices they made and explaining how research influenced these decisions.

Learners also need to evaluate the effectiveness of the work they have produced in relation to the specific requirements of the commission brief.

Several learners evaluated their own final piece and their performance skills which is not a requirement for this unit.

The written evaluation generated the full range of responses with regard to learners evaluating the effectiveness of their own work. The quality of written work and use of specialist terminology ranged from the 'limited' and 'adequate' to the 'effective' and 'authoritative'. In the strongest responses, learners included comprehensive evaluation of how their work was developed, fully justifying the choices and decisions they had made and how research had influenced those decisions. These written evaluations also included comprehensive and insightful evaluation of the effectiveness of the final performance work in relation to the specific requirements of the commission brief.

I really feel like my piece met the criteria that was set by the commission for example it was six minutes long which I believe is the perfect amount of time to tell an enjoyable story but also because I think it isn't to long that my audience, all very young, won't disengage from the piece and also not to short that the piece looks and feels rushed, as outlined in the commission, I was asked to create a piece around the theme of mystery, once again I feel like I successfully did this, my piece was all about being transported into new worlds and then once arriving trying to work out the mystery of exactly where I was and why I was there. It was also a mystery to the audience who had no idea where I would end up next and how long I would be there for. The main section of mystery in my piece was right at the start when I opened the book and was quickly transported into Oz the reason this was mysterious was I never actually told the audience where I had arrived I let a moment of dance do this to the song Follow the Yellow Brick Road from the Wizard of Oz. My stimulus was based on the quote 'Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.' I feel as though my piece really took inspiration from this quote because on my journey I start and stop in the same

place, the book store and I think the journey my character went on throughout this circle would really relate to parents in the audience, as I set out in my proposal I really wanted to not only capture the imagination of my target audience but also their parent, I wanted them to see what a great thing it was to read to their children and how it could not only capture their child's imagination but also their own. I feel like the parents in the audience would really relate to my character and I really hope that it will inspire them to either read to their child or get their child a book to read.

And

My chosen stimulus was the image of the door and this is what immediately inspired me to devise a piece based on the Secret Garden due to the imagery and what that represented to me. This is a book that I was lucky to read and explore with my mother as a child so it is very personal to me and is another reason why I want my mother's voice to echo at the end of the performance. The image also connoted the idea of something that was hidden or a door to something new such as Mary's journey to finding herself and her creativity. Creativity is something that linked the stimulus and the brief together for me and it is something that I wanted to focus on within my performance. I physically did this by entirely creating the garden and taking it away again with my flowers and this also painted the idea that this was all imagination as at the beginning and at the end there was a blank stage with a simple spotlight. I liked this imagery of the stage being a blank canvas for Mary to create a magical world of colour and creating, promoting how reading can metaphorically transport you into another word and expand your mind. I mirrored this when Mary spoke about the garden in the song with phrases such as 'outlet for creativity', 'expand her mind', 'living things stirring under her feet'. These all create a semantic field of creativity, safety and hope, encouraging young people to feel these emotions by reading too. I wanted to show the audience that even if their parents never read to them, there is still hope and they can still find the joy no matter their age.

And with a focus on **how** the work was developed:

I developed my piece effectively using improvisation for the monologue, quoting areas of my research. I explored musical theatre repertoire for the essence of imagination and magic which is where I found a 'Pure Imagination' remix on YouTube. I developed my piece around Roald Dahl as Willy Wonka who is a recognisable character and the remix was a successful underscore as it didn't have lyrics yest the tune would appeal to a younger audience……. I started with a

teacher lecturing a class and discovered a festival speaker interacts with the audience. So I altered my piece and broke the fourth wall with eye contact and cheerful expression which worked more successfully….. I started with the whole song being performed in one go but chose to break up the song knowing a younger audience has a shorter attention span and I wanted to keep the momentum of the piece driving forward.

The creative process for my piece worked very well – I developed the piece with improvisation and note taking, regularly referred back to the commission and evaluated run throughs to develop effective performance skills. For example, I noticed in a recording mystery wasn't emphasised verbally so I elongated the word and slowed my pace…….

Less successful written evaluations often contained references to basic research activities and offered some explanation of the development processes. These learners tended to provide an outline of the plot of their work and some evaluation of the technical success of their final performance which, as explained above, is not a requirement for this task.

I used a blank set (asides from the physical doorframe, which I was told was effective - it wasn't just imaginary as its presence kept the attention to stimulus present throughout) to encourage my imagination to fill the space and quickly change between locations based choices my audience made, thoroughly testing my improvisation skills in regards to physicality: swimming through icy lakes and passing through mineshafts with a flaming torch, which were strong and obvious according to my audience.

Other written evaluations justified some of their choices and decisions with reference to the chosen stimulus and the theme, however included little explanation or evaluation of the work in relation to other aspects of the commission brief.

A few learners wrote about their ideas for further development of their work. This is a requirement for Unit 3: Group Workshop Performance, however not for this unit, and it meant that learners were spending valuable time writing about something that could gain little credit.

Several learners outlined the content of their individual performances without evaluating **how** they had developed their performance work. These same learners also tended to evaluate the technical competency of their individual performances rather than evaluate how effectively their individual performances met the specific requirements of the commission

brief. This therefore impacted upon the amount of marks that could be credited for AO4.

As already explained, the most successful work provided comprehensive and insightful evaluation of how the work was developed and how effectively it met the requirements of the commission brief. This work tended to fully illustrate the journey from the written proposal, through to the individual performance, and fulsomely referenced the specific requirements of the commission brief, the theme, the chosen stimulus and the research undertaken throughout.

Administration

Most centres presented the work as outlined in the Administrative Support Guide for this unit. However, there were issues with some work from a small number of centres.

Centres are reminded that work must be submitted in the correct format in terms of recordings and either printed copies of the written proposal and written evaluation or if these are not sent as hard copies then each learner's work should be presented in its own folder, along with others in the cohort, on a new, undamaged USB in a format that will open/play on any commonly used laptop. Recordings must be saved in one of the file types listed in the Administrative Support Guide and it is the centres responsibility to ensure the recordings play on another computer.

Centres are also reminded that they must complete the essential documents relating to each learner and the centre itself. The examiner requires these for marking and centre/learner identification. It is essential that this paperwork is printed out and provided as a hard copy, which the examiner can write on and not just sent digitally. Centres are reminded that it is not part of the examiners' role to print out and complete the administration information on the centre's paperwork.

Most centres very helpfully noted on the centre register when a learner was absent and/or when a learner hadn't completed some work, for example the written evaluation. This was very much appreciated and meant that time was not wasted by the examiner and Pearson trying to find out if the work should have been included or if the centre had made a simple administrative mistake by not including work for one or more learners.

Recordings were generally of a good quality although very occasionally the camera was too far away, sometimes behind the audience, making it difficult to see some of the detail in the work the learners were doing. In these cases, learners sometimes could not be credited for some of the potential detail and technical skill within their performance work. It is worth reminding centres/learners that this is an externally assessed task and that, for the sake of learners assessment and final result, the camera should have the best view of the performance work.

In a few cases stage lighting sometimes impacted on the clarity of the recording and centres should ensure that the lights do not bleach out

performers' faces and that the whole stage is in camera shot throughout the performance.

In a few other cases there was a problem with audibility because of the position of the camera and/or the quality of the recording. Centres should ensure that if a camera is positioned by a speaker or other sound source when examiners are also meant to hear the learners speaking or singing that the balance of recorded sound enables the examiner to hear the learner's words.

Some centres sent a contact detail and email address in case there were any problems with the work or media and this made it very easy for examiners to make contact and obtain a missing milestone log entry etc. This was also particularly useful if the material had been encrypted and the encryption code was not available to the examiner/senior examiner. Centres are very strongly encouraged to adopt this approach in future series.

Summary

Based on the performance seen during this series the following should be considered:

- Learners should be encouraged to respond to the commissioning body and the requirements of the commission brief in addition to the theme of the paper and the chosen stimulus. In other words, all components of the task paper need to be addressed in the written proposal, the individual performance and the written evaluation.

- Learners are unlikely to be able to access the higher mark bands in any area if they only respond to the stimulus and/or the theme and ignore the other aspects of the commission requirements.

- There is no need to repeat the information regarding the commissioning body or the commission brief in the written proposal, learners should interpret this information and incorporate it into their response.

- Learners should respond to the requirements of the commission as outlined in the task paper and not adapt or change these requirements. The organisation is seeking to commission work to meet specific requirements and learners should aim to demonstrate how their individual work meets all of these requirements.

- It is important to not only perform to a high technical standard, but also to demonstrate how the performance content imaginatively responds to all the requirements of the commission brief, the theme and the stimulus.

- The commission brief requires an 'individual performance'; therefore, reading from a script, talks and lectures, etc. do not meet the requirements of this unit. Individual performances need to aim to meet *all* the requirements of the commission brief and ideally to do so in an *imaginative manner*, plus the work needs to *interpret* the stimulus in a *creative* or *sophisticated* manner and have a fully refined structure.

- The individual performance should take place in front of an invited audience.

- Ensure the detail of learner's performance work can be clearly seen in the recording and that audience members, lighting issues or the angle of

the camera does not obscure the performance work.

- Ensure the learner's vocal work can be clearly heard in the recording and there is a balance between any external sound source and the learner's own voice.

- In their written evaluations, learners need to evaluate how they have developed their performance work, justifying the decisions and choices they made and explaining how research influenced these decisions.

- In their written evaluations, learners also need to evaluate the effectiveness of the work they have produced in relation to the specific requirements of the commission brief.

- There is no requirement for learners to write about their ideas for further development of their work in this unit or evaluate the quality of their final performance unless they do in relation to the requirements of the commission brief.

Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at 80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL, United Kingdom